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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [FR](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION REPORT - MIDDLE EAST ISSUES EUROPE AND
THE CHINESE ARMS EMBARGO
PARIS - THURSDAY, APRIL 14, 2005

(A) SUBJECTS COVERED IN TODAY'S REPORT:

- [1](#). MIDDLE EAST ISSUES
- [2](#). EUROPE AND THE CHINESE ARMS EMBARGO

B) SUMMARY OF COVERAGE:

THE BATTLE FOR THE EUROPEAN CONSTITUTION AND THE REFERENDUM
ARE TODAY'S MAJOR LEAD STORY AS PRESIDENT CHIRAC BEGINS HIS
CAMPAIGN IN FAVOR OF THE `YES' WITH A TELEVISED DEBATE THIS
EVENING ON TF ONE. THE FORMAT OF THE DEBATE, WITH PRE-SELECTED
STUDENTS, THE MODERATORS, COMING FOR THE MOST PART FROM
TELEVISION ENTERTAINMENT RATHER THAN JOURNALISM, AND THE
CHOICE OF A PRIVATE NETWORK RATHER THAN THE PUBLIC SERVICE
TELEVISION NETWORK ARE ALL SUBJECTS FEEDING THE CONTROVERSY.

RIGHT-OF-CENTER LE FIGARO CARRIES AN OP-ED BY NICOLAS SARKOZY,
FORMER INTERIOR MINISTER AND NOW PRESIDENT OF CHIRAC'S PARTY,
THE UMP, ON WHY HE WILL VOTE `YES' AND WHY THE FRENCH, WHO
FAVOR A STRONGER EUROPE SHOULD ALSO VOTE `YES': "THE FRENCH
WANT A EUROPE THAT WILL ADDRESS THEIR CONCERNS ABOUT
EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL JUSTICE. THEY WANT A EUROPE CAPABLE OF
WEIGHING IN AGAINST SUCH GIANTS AS THE U.S., CHINA AND INDIA.
AND TO BE TREATED AS AN EQUAL. THEY WANT FREE TRADE AND
COMPETITIVENESS TO SERVE HUMAN BEINGS, NOT THE OPPOSITE. I
BELIEVE THE EUROPEAN CONSTITUTION WILL ANSWER THESE
CONCERNS..."

FINANCIAL LA TRIBUNE CARRIES A TWO-PAGE REPORT ON PAUL
WOLFOVITZ TITLED: "THE WORLD BANK PREPARING FOR THE WOLFOVITZ
HURRICANE." "ALTHOUGH UNANIMOUSLY ELECTED, HE WILL BE WELCOMED
BY A TEAM THAT ADMITS TO FEELING SOMEWHAT OVERWHELMED. HIS
DETRACTORS EMPHASIZE HIS LACK OF DIPLOMATIC EXPERIENCE. WITH
THIS NOMINATION, IT IS SUGGESTED THAT THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION
WANTS TO TURN THE WORLD BANK INTO AN INSTRUMENT OF HIS
`CRUSADE' FOR IMPOSED DEMOCRACY, IF NECESSARY BY FORCE."

THE POLITICAL STALEMATE IN LEBANON IS REPORTED. IN CATHOLIC LA
CROIX AGNES ROTIVEL REPORTS ON THE OPEN LETTER FROM THE LEADER
OF HEZBOLLAH, HASSAN NASRALLAH, PUBLISHED IN LEBANON AND
ASKING FRANCE TO "INTERCEDE TO FACILITATE THE INTERNAL
LEBANESE DIALOGUE AND TO DISASSOCIATE ITSELF FROM THE U.S."
THE SITUATION IN LEBANON, BUT ALSO IRAQ AND THE MIDDLE EAST IN
GENERAL WILL BE "ON TODAY'S MENU WHEN PRINCE ABDALLAH OF SAUDI
ARABIA MEETS WITH PRESIDENT CHIRAC." (SEE PART C)

IN ECONOMIC LES ECHOS JEAN-PIERRE NEU PENS AN ANALYSIS OF
FRANCE'S COMPLICATED POSITION ON THE LIFTING OF THE CHINESE
ARMS EMBARGO AND ITS ROLE IN THE EU. (SEE PART C)

(C) SUPPORTING TEXT/BLOCK QUOTES:

MIDDLE EAST ISSUES

"THE MIDDLE EAST ON THE SAUDI PRINCE'S FRENCH MENU"
PIERRE PRIER IN RIGHT-OF-CENTER LE FIGARO (04/14): "THE WORLD
AFTER 9/11 WILL BE AT THE HEART OF TODAY'S FRANCO-SAUDI TALKS.
LEBANON WILL BE THE CENTERPIECE, WITH SAUDI ARABIA AND FRANCE
ON THE SAME WAVELENGTH REGARDING SYRIA AND THE UN RESOLUTION
FOR ITS WITHDRAWAL. BUT SAUDI ARABIA IS ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT
THE UN'S GROWING PRESSURE ON THE ARAB WORLD TO MAKE REFORMS.
SAUDI ARABIA, WHICH IS ITSELF BEING URGED BY PRESIDENT BUSH TO
MAKE REFORMS, WILL LET FRANCE KNOW THE EXTENT OF ITS CONCERNS
ON THIS PARTICULAR SUBJECT. THE POLITICAL VACUUM WHICH APPEARS
TO BE SETTling OVER LEBANON IS OF PARTICULAR CONCERN TO RIYADH
BECAUSE IN ITS VIEW IT CARRIES THE MAKINGS OF RENEWED
HOSTILITIES BETWEEN THE SHIITES AND THE SUNNIS. THIS NEW
RISING SHIITE POWER, FROM LEBANON TO IRAQ, IS PARTICULARLY
WORRISOME FOR THE SUNNI SAUDI KINGDOM."

EUROPE AND THE CHINESE ARMS EMBARGO

"FRANCE TAKING RISKS OVER THE LIFTING OF THE CHINESE ARMS
EMBARGO"

JEAN-PIERRE NEU IN RIGHT-OF-CENTER LES ECHOS (04/14):

"FRANCE'S VOICE IN FAVOR OF LIFTING THE ARMS EMBARGO IS A NEW
OPPORTUNITY FOR PARIS TO MAKE FRANCE'S SINGULAR VOICE HEARD IN

ITS FIGHT FOR A MULTIPOLAR WORLD. BUT CHIRAC'S POSITION IS RAISING EYEBROWS IN WASHINGTON AS WELL AS IN EUROPE. THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO, WHICH REMAINS VERY SYMBOLIC, CAN PUT IN THE BALANCE THE FUTURE OF EU-U.S. RELATIONS AND CAN SHATTER EUROPE'S JOINT DEFENSE POLICY. AFTER SECRETARY ZOELLICK'S REMARKS IN BRUSSELS ABOUT ENDANGERING THE TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY. THE RISKS FOR EUROPEAN DEFENSE INDUSTRIALISTS WHO WOULD LOVE TO PIGGYBACK ON U.S. MILITARY PROGRAMS ARE ENORMOUS. WHATEVER PARIS DOES, WHETHER IT BRINGS EUROPE AROUND TO ITS CHINESE VIEWS OR WHETHER IT FAILS, IT WILL NOT BE PAID BACK, NOT IN CHINA, JAPAN, KOREA OR THE U.S." LEACH